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Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas



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Justice Department official suggested ignoring court orders on deportations, whistleblower claims

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A top Justice Department official suggested the Trump administration might have to ignore court orders as it prepared to deport Venezuelan migrants it accused of being gang members, a fired department lawyer alleged in a whistleblower complaint made public Tuesday. The whistleblower's claims about Principal Assistant Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove came a day before Bove is set to face lawmakers Wednesday for his confirmation hearing to become a federal appeals court judge.

In a letter seeking a congressional and Justice



The U.S. Department of Justice logo is seen on a podium before a press conference with Attorney General Pam Bondi, Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at the Justice Department in Washington.

Associated Press



Department watchdog investigation, the former government lawyer, Erez Reuveni, alleges he was pushed out and publicly disparaged after resisting efforts to defy judges and make arguments in court that were false or had no legal basis.

The most explosive allegation in the letter from Reuveni's lawyers centers around a Justice Department meeting in March concerning President Donald Trump's plans to invoke the Alien Enemies Act over what the president claimed was an invasion by the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua. Reuveni says Bove raised the possibility that a court might block the deportations before they could happen. Reuveni claims Bove used a profanity, saying the department would need to consider telling the courts "f you," and "ignore any such order," according to the filing.

"Mr. Reuveni was stunned by Bove's statement because, to Mr. Reuveni's knowledge, no one in DOJ leadership - in any Administration had ever suggested the Department of Justice could blatantly ignore court orders, especially with" an expletive, the filing says.

In the weeks following the

meeting, Reuveni says he raised concerns in several cases about efforts to violate court orders through "lack of candor, deliberate delay and disinformation."

Reuveni's claims were first reported Tuesday by The New York Times.

Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche called the allegations "utterly false," saying that he was at the March meeting and "at no time did anyone suggest a court order should not be followed."

"Planting a false hit piece the day before a confirmation hearing is something we have come to expect from the media, but it does not mean it should be tolerated," Blanche wrote in a post on X. Reuveni had been promoted under the Trump administration to serve as acting deputy director of the Office of Immigration Litigation after working for the Justice Department for nearly 15 years under both Republican and Democratic administrations.

Reuveni's firing came after he conceded in an April court hearing that a Salvadoran man, Kilmar Abrego Garcia, should not have been deported to an El Salvador prison, and expressed frustration over a lack of information about the administration's actions.

After that hearing, Reuveni says he refused to sign onto an appeal brief in Abrego Garcia's case that included arguments that were "contrary to law, frivolous, and untrue."

"The consequences of DOJ's actions Mr. Reuveni reports have grave impacts not only for the safety of individuals removed from the country in violation of court orders, but also for the constitutional rights and protections of all persons citizen and noncitizen alike who are potential victims of flagrant deliberate disregard of due process and the rule of law by the agency charged with upholding it," Reuveni's lawyers wrote. □

Governors of Western states give mixed reactions to proposed federal land sell-off

By MORGAN LEE
Associated Press

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — A Republican-sponsored proposal before Congress to mandate the sale of federal public lands received a mixed reception Monday from the governors of Western states.

A budget proposal from Utah Republican Sen. Mike Lee would mandate the sale of more than 3,125 square miles (8,093 square kilometers) of federal lands to state or other entities. It was included recently in a draft provision of the GOP's sweeping tax cut package.

At a summit Monday of Western state governors,



Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham of New Mexico, center, watched by Governors Larry Rodin of South Dakota, right, and Jared Polis of Colorado, talks about priorities for affordable housing and public lands in Santa Fe, N.M., on Monday, June 23, 2025, at a meeting of the Western Governor's Association. □

Associated Press

New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham said the approach is problematic in New Mexico because of the close relationship residents have with those public lands.

"I'm open" to the idea, said Lujan Grisham, a second-term Democratic governor and former congresswoman.

"Except here."

"Our public lands, we have a very strong relationship with the openness, and they belong to all of us," said Lujan Grisham, who was announcing written recommendations Monday on affordable housing strategies from the Western Governors' Association. □

Trump administration authorizes \$30 million for Israeli-backed group distributing food in Gaza

By MATTHEW LEE and ELLEN KNICKMEYER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration has authorized providing \$30 million to a U.S.- and Israeli-backed group that is distributing food in Gaza, a U.S. official said Tuesday, an operation that has drawn criticism from other humanitarian organizations.

The request is the first known U.S. government funding for the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's aid distribution efforts amid the Israel-Hamas war. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive diplomatic issue involving a controversial aid program. The announcement comes as violence and chaos have plagued the new food distribution sites since opening last month. GHF says no one has been killed at the aid sites themselves and that it has delivered 44 million meals to Palestinians in need.

Palestinian witnesses and health officials say Israeli forces have repeatedly opened fire on crowds heading to the sites for desperately needed food, killing hundreds in recent weeks. The Israeli military says it has fired warning shots at people it said approached its forces in a suspicious manner while going to the sites. Israel wants the GHF to replace a system coordinated by the United Nations and international aid groups. Along with the United States, it accuses Hamas of stealing aid, without offering evidence. The U.N. denies there is a systematic diversion of aid.

The Associated Press reported Saturday that the American-led group had asked the Trump administration for the initial funding so it can continue its aid operation, which has been criticized by the U.N., humanitarian groups and others. They accuse the foundation of co-operating with Israel's objectives in the 21-month-old war against Hamas in a way that violates humanitarian principles. □



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North Carolina to send mailers to about 200,000 voters asking for missing registration info

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY
and GARY ROBERTSON

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — North Carolina election officials will send mailers to about 200,000 voters asking them to provide information missing from their state registration records, seeking to address a Republican concern raised during a protracted legal fight over a state Supreme Court seat and a recent U.S. Justice Department lawsuit.

The North Carolina State Board of Elections voted unanimously Tuesday to begin contacting voters whose records lack a driver's license number or the last four digits of their Social Security number. Last month, the Justice Department sued state election officials, alleging the board had violated federal law by failing to collect the identifying information.

The lawsuit was noteworthy because it was filed just weeks after Republicans wrested control of the state elections board away from the state's Democratic



Newly appointed members of the North Carolina State Board of Elections, from left, Jeff Carmon, Francis De Luca, Stacy "Four" Eggers, Siobhan O'Duffy Millen and Bob Rucho, take their oaths of office at the Dobbs Building in Raleigh, N.C., on May 7, 2025.

Associated Press

governor after years of failed attempts and gave the power of board appointments to the state auditor, a Republican. The law was passed late last

year, before Republicans lost their supermajority in the Legislature, which they used to override the governor's veto.

The Justice Department

sought to force the state board to create a prompt method to obtain the identifying information.

Sam Hayes, the board's new executive director, told

board members on Tuesday that the department had "tentatively signed off" on the plan, which involves sending up to three mailers to voters that will include a self-addressed, postage-prepaid return envelope with a form for collecting the information. "The goal here is to obtain that information as efficiently as possible and satisfy the outstanding litigation here and, of course, comport with federal law," Hayes said. The previous state board had acknowledged the issue and updated the registration form to make it clear that either a driver's license number or, if a voter didn't have a driver's license, the last four digits of a Social Security number were required. But it decided it was not going to ask voters to provide the information, pointing to the state's voter ID law which confirms a voter's identity. About half the 200,000 affected voters would be limited to casting provisional ballots until they provide the information to the state, Hayes said. □

Cargo ship carrying new vehicles to Mexico sinks in the North Pacific weeks after catching fire

By MARK THIESSEN
Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)

— A cargo ship that had been delivering new vehicles to Mexico sank in the North Pacific Ocean, weeks after crew members abandoned ship when they couldn't extinguish an onboard fire that left the carrier dead in the water.

The Morning Midas sank Monday in international water off Alaska's Aleutian Islands chain, the ship's management company, London-based Zodiac Maritime, said in a statement.

"There is no visible pollution," said Petty Officer Cameron Snell, an Alaska-based U.S. Coast Guard spokesperson. "Right now we also have vessels on scene to respond to any pollution."

Fire damage compounded by bad weather and water seepage caused the carrier to sink in waters about 16,404 feet (5,000 meters) deep and about 415 miles (770 kilometers) from land, the statement said.

The ship was loaded with

about 3,000 new vehicles intended for a major Pacific port in Mexico. It was not immediately clear if any of the cars were removed before it sank, and Zodiac Maritime did not immediately respond to messages Tuesday.



In this photo provided by the U.S. Coast Guard, smoke rises from cargo vessel Morning Midas approximately 300 miles south of Adak, Alaska, June 3, 2025.

Associated Press

A savage crew arrived days after the fire disabled the vehicle.

Two salvage tugs containing pollution control equipment will remain on scene to monitor for any signs of pollution or debris, the company said. The crew members of those two ships were not injured when the Morning Midas sank.

Zodiac Maritime said it is also sending another specialized pollution response vessel to the location as an added precaution.

The Coast Guard said it received a distress alert June 3 about a fire aboard the Morning Midas, which then was roughly 300 miles (490 kilometers) southwest of Adak Island.

There were 22 crew members onboard the Morning Midas. All evacuated to a

lifeboat and were rescued by a nearby merchant marine vessel.

There were no injuries. Among the cars were about 70 fully electric and about 680 hybrid vehicles. A large plume of smoke was initially seen at the ship's stern coming from the deck loaded with electric vehicles, the Coast Guard and Zodiac Maritime said at the time.

Adak is about 1,200 miles (1,930 kilometers) west of Anchorage, Alaska's largest city.

The 600-foot (183-meter) Morning Midas was built in 2006 and sails under a Liberian flag.

The car and truck carrier left Yantai, China, on May 26 en route to Mexico, according to the industry site marinetrack.com. □

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Russian attacks kill 26 civilians in Ukraine as Zelenskyy seeks more Western help

By ILLIA NOVIKOV
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian drones, missiles and artillery killed at least 26 civilians and injured more than 200 others in Ukraine, officials said Tuesday, as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy sought guarantees at a NATO summit of further Western help to repel Moscow's invasion.

Russian forces have relentlessly struck civilian areas throughout the 3-year-old war. More than 12,000 Ukrainian civilians have been killed, according to the United Nations. Ukraine has also launched long-range drones against Russia, hitting residential areas. Zelenskyy joined Western leaders at a NATO summit in The Hague, Netherlands, and is keen to lock in additional military support for Ukraine, as recent direct peace talks have made no progress on a settlement.

Key U.S. military commitments to Ukraine left over from the Biden administra-



A view of the damaged flat of an apartment building where the Ukrainian drone fell in Krasnogorsk, just outside Moscow, Russia, on Tuesday, June 24, 2025.

Associated Press

tion are expected to run out within months, according to analysts, and there is uncertainty over whether U.S. President Donald Trump is willing to provide more.

A Russian ballistic missile at-

tack on Dnipro hit multiple civilian sites in the central Ukrainian city around midday Tuesday, killing 17 people and injuring more than 200 others, officials said. "The number of casualties is constantly being up-

dated," Dnipro's regional administration head Serhii Lysak wrote on Telegram. In the nearby town of Samar, an attack killed two people and injured 14, he said.

The barrage damaged 19

schools, 10 kindergartens, a vocational school, a music school and a social welfare office, as well as eight medical facilities, according to Dnipro Mayor Borys Filatov. Schools are closed for the summer break.

One of the blasts blew out the windows of a passenger train carrying about 500 people. Filatov declared Wednesday to be an official day of mourning. In a post on Telegram, Zelenskyy said Russia needs foreign components to build its ballistic missiles and he urged countries to crack down on Moscow's "schemes" to obtain them. "Sanctions against Russia must also be significantly strengthened," he said.

Russia also shelled residential neighborhoods and critical infrastructure across Ukraine's southern Kherson region, killing four civilians and wounding at least 11 others, according to Oleksandr Prokudin, head of the regional military administration. □

U.S. consulate condemns Hong Kong's government for 'repression' of Independence Day celebrations

By KANIS LEUNG
Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — The U.S. consulate in Hong Kong on Tuesday condemned the city's government for what it called repression of U.S. Independence Day celebrations after local education authorities reportedly cautioned teachers and students not to attend events marking the day and organized by American diplomats.

The consulate accused the Hong Kong government of interfering with U.S. Consulate General-hosted events, saying U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide celebrate Independence Day every year by hosting receptions and other festivities.

"We condemn the Hong Kong government's repression of U.S. Independence Day celebrations," it said in an emailed re-

ply to The Associated Press. "Its attempts to characterize these activities as 'unlawful' only further reveals its insecurity and fear of freedom."

The consulate's criticism came days after a Facebook page, "Edu Lancet," reported that the city's education authorities had sent "friendly reminders" to multiple schools asking teachers not to "casually join" the consulate's events and be cautious about violating the national security law.

The reminder also asked the schools to discourage their students from joining the festivities, it said.

The Associated Press could not independently verify the claims by the Facebook page, which often provides updates about the education sector. □



A man walks past U.S. Consulate in Hong Kong, March 15, 2021.

Associated Press

NATO chief praises Trump for making Europe 'pay in a BIG way' on defense ahead of a key summit

By MOLLY QUELL, LORNE COOK and MIKE CORDER
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands

(AP) — NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte praised President Donald Trump for making Europe "pay in a BIG way," as allied leaders gathered in the Netherlands on Tuesday for a historic summit that could unite them around a new defense spending pledge or widen divisions among the 32 member countries.

The U.S. president, while flying aboard Air Force One en route to The Hague, published a screenshot of a private message from Rutte saying: "Donald, you have driven us to a really, really important moment for America and Europe and the world. You will achieve something NO American president in decades could get done."

"Europe is going to pay in a BIG way, as they should, and it will be your win," Rutte wrote. NATO confirmed that he sent the message.

The allies are likely to endorse a goal of spending 5% of their gross domestic product on their security, to be able to fulfil the alli-



NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte addresses the audience at the NATO public forum on the sidelines of the NATO summit in The Hague, Netherlands, Tuesday, June 24, 2025.

Associated Press

ance's plans for defending against outside attack. Still, Spain has said it cannot, and that the target is "unreasonable." Trump has said the U.S. should not have to.

Slovakia said that it reserves the right to decide how to reach the target by NATO's new 2035 deadline.

"There's a problem with Spain.

Spain is not agreeing, which is very unfair to the rest of them, frankly," Trump told reporters on Air Force One on his way to the two-day meeting.

NATO's first summit with Trump, in 2018, unraveled due to a dispute over defense spending.

Ahead of the meeting, Britain, France and Germany committed to the 5% goal.

Host country the Netherlands is also onboard. Nations closer to the borders of Ukraine, Russia and its ally Belarus had previously pledged to do so.

Trump's first appearance at NATO since returning to the White House was supposed to center on how the U.S. secured the historic military spending pledge from others in the security alliance

effectively bending it to its will.

But the spotlight has shifted to Trump's decision to strike three nuclear enrichment facilities in Iran that the administration says eroded Tehran's nuclear ambitions, as well as the president's sudden announcement that Israel and Iran had reached a "complete and total ceasefire."

Ukraine has also suffered as a result of that conflict. It has created a need for weapons and ammunition that Kyiv desperately wants, and shifted the world's attention away. Past NATO summits have focused almost entirely on the war in Ukraine, now in its fourth year.

Still, Rutte insisted NATO could manage more than one conflict at a time.

"If we would not be able to deal with ... the Middle East, which is very big and commanding all the headlines, and Ukraine at the same time, we should not be in the business of politics and military at all," he said.

"If you can only deal with one issue at a time, that will be that. Then let other people take over." □

At least 120 children have been abducted by insurgents in Mozambique, rights group says

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — At least 120 children have been kidnapped by jihadist insurgents in northern Mozambique in recent days, Human Rights Watch said Tuesday, warning of a rise in abductions in the country's troubled Cabo Delgado province.

The children are reportedly being used by an Islamic State-linked group known locally as al-Shabab to transport looted goods, perform forced labor, and in some cases serve as child soldiers or be forced into marriage.

Mozambique has been battling the Islamist insurgency in Cabo Delgado since 2017. Government

forces have struggled to contain the violence, relying on support from troops sent by Rwanda, South Africa, and other regional partners. In 2020, the insur-

gents carried out a wave attacks in which they beheaded dozens of people, including children. Witnesses have said that children abducted from towns and

villages have been used as fighters in subsequent attacks.

The violence has displaced more than 600,000 people and spilled into neighboring provinces, according to the United Nations.

Human Rights Watch said there had been a resurgence of attacks and child kidnappings in the last two months and called on Mozambique's government to do more to find the children and prevent further abductions. The problems in Cabo Delgado were largely overshadowed by Mozambique's deadly and long-running post-election protests last year. Cabo Delgado has also

been battered by several recent cyclones and hurt by U.S. President Donald Trump's cuts to foreign aid. The Norwegian Refugee Council's Secretary General, Jan Egeland, visited Cabo Delgado this month and described the situation in northern Mozambique as a neglected crisis.

"Climate shocks, increasing violence and spiralling hunger are having a terrible impact on the population," Egeland said.

The NRC said more than 5 million people faced critical levels of hunger and more than 900,000 people faced emergency hunger conditions. □



In this image made from video, a Mozambican soldier rides on an armored vehicle at the airport in Mocimboa da Praia, Cabo Delgado province, Mozambique, Aug. 9, 2021.

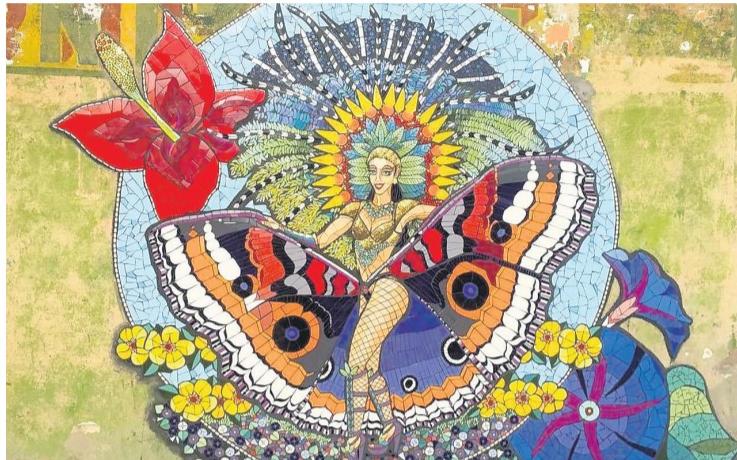
Associated Press

Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas

SAN NICOLAS— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between the 1920's until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas - more than anywhere else on the island.

Flow of history
if you are looking for history San Nicolas has it. Here



you will find three amazing museums, The Museum of Industry, the Community Museum and the Carnival Euphoria, all within walking distance from one another. The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San Nicolas once a bustling business center. Experience the touching stories of those who were part of this history.

Nicolaas Store built in 1940 and renovated in 2014 is the home of the Community Museum. The collection is remarkable and spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaus of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barbershop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of education or enjoyment.

casing Aruba's Carnival. See how are Carnival has developed over the past 65 years.

The new San Nicolas In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to grow. This is the new San Nicolas, a place that is starting to become a magnet for all that is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection of artists from around the world. Thanks to the efforts of various art organizations in Aruba, such as Art Rules Aruba and Aruba Art Fair, San Nicolas has had quite the aesthetic makeover with regards to vibrant street art. Each year more and more stunning murals



are replacing broken down buildings with colorful art pieces that keep brightening up SunriseCity.

Must See, Do, Buy & Eat
A little bit of everything can be found in the main street. Stores selling shoes, clothing, jewelry you name it. Don't miss out on trying the exquisite food offered by the cafes and restaurants or just enjoy a peaceful walk admiring the murals, mosaic benches and all the history San Nicolas has to offer.

How Aruban beaches came to be!

(Oranjestad)—We've talked about the best beaches to visit on the island before, but have you ever wondered how Aruba got its white, sandy beaches, and why there's a clear difference between the northern and southern shores? Here are some fun facts about the development of Aruban beaches.

How did Aruba get its white, sandy beaches?

Aruba's beaches have developed over the span of thousands of years. Waves crashing on the rocky formations along our coast line (which consists mainly of coral reefs) have started to wear and tear the reefs over time, resulting



in its gradual breakdown. Fish that feed off corals also contribute to this, one small bite at a time. Over the course of thousands of years, as waves continue to crash and fish continue to eat off the corals, sand starts to accumulate around the area. However, whether the sand stays there is another question to be answered, and this is where we highlight the biggest difference between

the northern and southern coast of the island.

The sand that accumulates around a torn coral reef is swept away along with the debris by the ocean stream. However, in areas where it's shallow and the stream is weaker, the sand tends to sink to the bottom faster. This is why the beaches in the south—the areas with weaker stream and shallower ocean

floors—has sand that stretches for miles. In contrast, the northern area, where the stream is much stronger and the ocean floor is much deeper, there is no sand present—they were swept away with the current!

Why north deep, but south shallow?
Ah! Good question...and interesting phrasing

Aruba is a continental island. The island actually forms part of South America, and the space between Aruba and the South American continent is simply referred to as land that runs under the ocean. This is why it gets gradu-



Source: archival document provided by the National

Source: archival document provided by the National Archive of Aruba (ANA).



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Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

Just like any other country, Aruba has unique and beautifully named neighborhoods that all form a part of its culture and development. Many of these names have a historical background and meaning that teaches us about the island and its rich culture every day.

With this series, we want to take you on a journey of discovery, where you'll learn not only the beautiful names but the history behind it that gives it life and meaning.

Anabui/Tierra Del Sol

This neighborhood can be seen on Van Raders map and Werbata as Anna Boei. Anna Boei is a name of which there isn't much information about its origin. The best historians were able to deduce is that this name came to be because of a miscommunication between Van Spengler and the natives who were living on the island. In the Arawak/Taino language one can find the word Anaiboa, which consists of Ana meaning flower or the best and Iboa; the juice of a cassava, which together would mean "the best juice



of a cassava".

If one assumes that the actual word heard was Anaboio instead, consisting of Ana meaning the best and Boio (bohio); house, the iteration of Anabui would mean "the best house." This is the origin that has been more or less speculated and assumed for the word Anabui and its meaning.

During the second world war and later, this area was used as a terrain for training of shooting by militia and latero n Korps Mariniers (the marines of Aruba). By the end of the previous century a large part of

Anabui was developed to have luxurious villas and a golf course, which lead to it getting the name Tierra Del Sol, Spanish for Land of the Sun. The name is not an official name, but the name of the development project that took place. It is hoped that the original

and 'old' name of Anabui is never lost and now it will be remembered by both locals and tourists.

Angochi

This name can be seen on the Werbata map with little and cursive letters. It is the unofficial name for the

area given by a tenant to the land that was rented to him.

The biggest probability that historians believe is that it comes from native descent, during the time in the 19th century where Mestizos still lived on Aruba. The name can't really be explained and according to books on its history seems to be more of a sign of corruption.

However, it seems to come from combining A(n), which is a generalizing prefix and Goeiza, which means 'the spirit of a living man'. Angochi remains more of a guess.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; An.



Step into the wild with another rough hike!



Join our guided rough hike through Aruba's stunning natural landscapes and along its diverse coast through Rooli Cacho, Paga Lomba, Boca Calcorito, Suplado and Boca di Bolonfa, through Boca Putri, Conchi, Moro and Daimari.

Led by passionate Nature Experience Rangers, this hike is your chance to connect deeply with nature and embrace Aruba's rugged beauty.

Date: Sunday, 29 June 2025

Time: 6:00 AM – 9:45 AM

Distance: 8.95 km / 5.56 mi

A bus will be arranged to bring all participants back to the Visitor Center at Parke Nacional Arikok.

Register here: <https://forms.office.com/r/mZ-AbSymb8s>.

Let's appreciate our nature's beauty in a respectful and mindful way.

Picture credit: Aruba Conservation Foundation.

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Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other

materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. For today we received a lovely message from Arturo Mora Hernandez from Ec-

uador.

He wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is ... warmth and happiness. From the warm smile of Arubans, to the beautiful blue of its beaches, the nature and sky. Aruba for me means to feel welcome and happy in this beautiful island!"

Photo taken by Arturo.

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers!



Soaring through the blue skies

Birds of Aruba

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's nature is very diverse and is home to several beautiful and majestic wildlife. Among these is the bright Trupial, whose angelic voice is always heard with the rising sun; the cuddly parakeet, always in company of another, and the majestic Warawara, a mighty bird that can be seen soaring in the clear blue skies.



Trupial Icterus icterus, or known locally as the Venezuelan or Orange Trupial, is a striking songbird whose bright orange feathers can be spotted from a far distance. Known to be the first bird to sing at the first sign of sunrise, this beloved songbird likes to wake up with a tune. But don't let their angelic songs fool you; the Trupial can be a bit aggressive towards any threat, protective over their nesting spots—nesting spots they most likely stole from other birds. Trupials can be seen regularly, often in trees or on top of a cactus.

Photo Credit: Daniel Ruben Gonzalez
 Prikichi (parakeet)
 The Brown-throated Prikichi (Aratinga pertinax) became the national bird

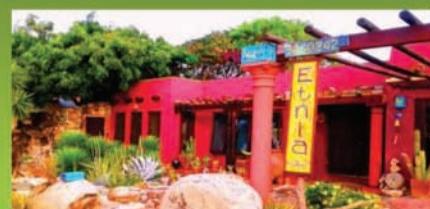


of Aruba back in 2015, at the request of Aruba Birdlife Conservation. The bright green, adorable parakeet usually flies in flock of 30 or more, but its population has been declining since the 2010s. Prikichis are a shier breed than the trupial, often flying away at the sign of any threat. They use termite nests for breeding spots and feed mostly on seeds from the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi tree and fruits. Photo Credit: Daniel Ruben Gonzalez

Warawara The Warawara or Caracara is one of the biggest birds found in the Aruban mondi. At a height of 41 to 60 cm, their wingspan can measure up to 125 cm. Known as the "garbage man", this bird of prey mostly feeds on dead animals. Its coat is dark brown, with a cream-colored neck, orange face, thick beak and long legs. The Warawara prefers to build its nest in the middle of tall cacti and produces a rattling, screaming sound, throwing its head back onto its back while calling. While these birds are a beautiful sight to behold, it is very important to keep your distance and respect their habitats. This is how we protect our wildlife. By admiring the beauty of Aruba in a safe and respectful manner, we can

do our part in protecting our sacred nature.
 Photo Credit: Aruba Birdlife Conservation





Article by Etnia Nativa

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The Sacred Gourd: From Myth to Totuma and Maraca

The narrative presented by Etnia Nativa—meaning “Native Ethnicity”—emphasizes the importance of reclaiming the island’s cultural identity and heritage, often overshadowed by colonial history. Through this platform the organization promotes the rediscovery of native traditions and identity, encouraging a shift away from colonial legacies toward cultural self-empowerment.

In this episode, we’re sharing the story of gourds—locally known as calbas and scientifically named *Crescentia cujete*. While we often enjoy shaking them as maracas at parties and celebrations, these gourds are also deeply embedded in cultural and artistic traditions. Beyond their festive use, they carry profound symbolic meaning, representing reincarnation, fertility,

and magic.

Gourds are among the oldest cultivated plants. Remains of gourds used as utensils have been found in Egyptian tombs dating back to the Twelfth Dynasty, around 2200–2400 B.C. Throughout history, they have served as practical tools—used as dippers and containers for storing grain and water. In Aruba, Paleo-Indians and later the Caquetios, who called them totuma or bangaña, used gourds as containers for water and other beverages.

In various ancient cultures around the world, gourds symbolize not only the preservation and creation of life, but also serve as vessels for the spirits of ancestors. Their rounded shape represents the birth of all things and the continuous cycle of life. For the Yi ethnic group of south-

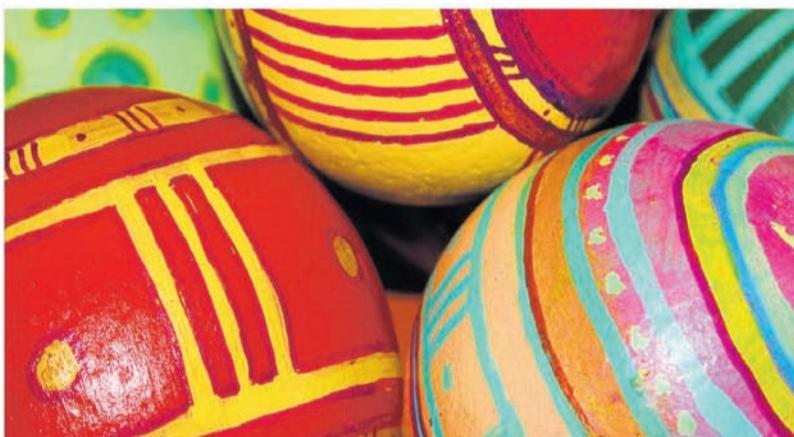
west China, the gourd holds deep spiritual and symbolic significance, intricately woven into their way of life. Featured prominently in stories of the Great Flood, the rebuilding of the world, and the birth of humanity, the gourd is explored through myth, religion, and art—interpreted as both a mythological archetype and a symbol of fertility and renewal.

In Native American traditions, the gourd carries multiple layers of meaning. In Taíno mythology, the story of Deminan and the Great Flood tells of a gourd that breaks open, releasing so much water that the earth is submerged. From this flood come fish—giving birth to the sea.

According to the myth, four children were born from the womb of Itiba Cahubaba, known as the Bloody Old Woman. All were twins. After her death during childbirth, the children emerged into the world. The first was named Deminan; the others remain unnamed. One day, while eating, they sensed the landowner’s return. In a hurry to hide, they tried to hang up a gourd, but it fell and shattered—flooding the earth and forming the sea.

It is believed that the calbas, or gourd plant, was brought to the island by the Archaic or Paleo-Indians over 4,000 years ago. Like many religious and metaphysical symbols, the gourd holds dual meanings. Practically, it stores food—lifeless matter such as fruits, nuts, and crops. Yet it also holds water, the essence of life itself. Unlike crops that decay after harvest, water remains constant, sustaining life.

As a life-bearing symbol, the gourd also appears in the form of a maraca—a musical instrument that echoes the womb, holding seeds: the matrix of life. Maracas were used in native divination rituals to invoke the spirits of the dead, as well as in food preparation, ceremonies, and daily life. In this way, the gourd bridges the worlds of the living and the dead, the practical and the sacred.□



If you enjoyed learning about our ancestral stories and wish to explore the true identity of the Aruban people, we invite you to visit Etnia Nativa—the only “living museum” of its kind in the Caribbean. Founded in 1994, Etnia Nativa has been a cultural pioneer, co-founding key institutions such as Aruba’s National Park, the Archaeological Museum, and several artisan foundations, among other voluntary initiatives.

Etnia Nativa offers a one-of-a-kind experience that connects visitors with the spirit and soul of the island’s ancient heritage. WhatsApp +297 592 2702 etnianativa03@gmail.com

Episode CCCIX -309

Basic driving rules on Aruba: Traffic signs

(Oranjestad)—Safe driving is an important part of any (off) road trip. That is why we want to offer you tips and tricks when it comes to driving on the roads and highways of Aruba. Today, we'll take a look at traffic signs.

Speed limit in certain areas As mentioned in yesterday's issue, the legal minimum and maximum speed limit on the island is 50 and 80 km/h respectively. However, there are some areas where it is mandated to drive up to a certain speed. This is always indicated by a circular traffic sign with red border and the number 50 on it. Signs like these are always paired by a similar sign with the number crossed out further down the road. This means that the mandate for this speed is now over; you may increase your velocity. Red borders on traffic sign—whether it's a circle or triangle—usually signal a warning, prohibition or preference.

Besides the "50" sign, you may also encounter a traffic sign that says "bebouwde kom". These can be found in San Nicolas and Oranjestad. Bebouwde kom signs are rectangular and blue, and essentially tell you that you are in a heavily inhabited area. The maximum speed limit in a bebouwde kom is 50 km/h. Just like the previous pair, bebouwde kom signs are also paired with a similar sign crossed out.

Priority signs



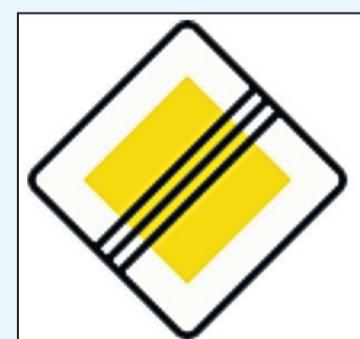
On the main roads of Aruba (not the highways), you may see a yellow, squared sign with a white border. This sign tells you that on this road, you have priority and all other traffic should yield to you. This sign can be seen in Savaneta for example. So, if you are driving on the main road in Savaneta going to San Nicolas, you are driving on a single long road, and other cars

that want to get on this main road or cross it, either from an intersection or from a dirt road, must all wait until traffic on the main road is clear. In other words, you do not have to stop for them. This sign too has a counter part that indicates that your priority is over.

Another priority sign you may encounter is a triangle sign with a red border and something that looks like a cross. You'll see this sign in an intersection. The general rule of thumb for crossing an intersection that do not contain traffic lights, roundabouts, sign or arrows on the road, is to always yield for traffic on your right.

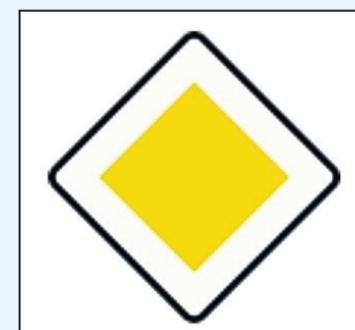


However, if you encounter this sign on your side of the intersection, you have priority over the other cars, even the one on your right.



have to know if you decide to drive on the island. These are of course other traffic signs, and we recommend you visit aruba-travelguide.com for an extensive overview of all traffic signs used on Aruba.

Picture credits: aruba-travelguide.com

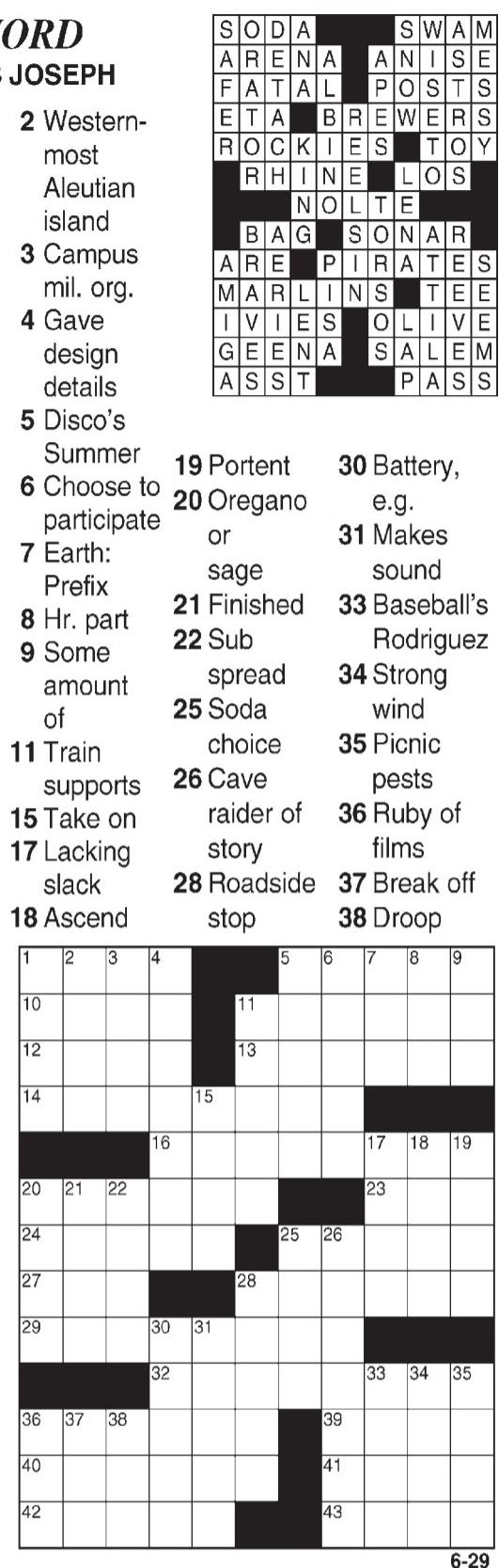


CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 2 Western-

- 1 Cell features
- 5 Church doctrine
- 10 Resting on
- 11 Entice
- 12 Diminutive suffix
- 13 Cleopatra's love
- 14 Garden harvest
- 16 Garden harvest
- 20 Big hits
- 23 Objective
- 24 Dodge
- 25 Effect preceder
- 27 Spanish king
- 28 Like lava
- 29 Garden harvest
- 32 Garden harvest
- 36 Craving
- 39 Country singer Jackson
- 40 Tooth layer
- 41 Quick drink
- 42 Borders
- 43 Chopping tools



A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

6-29

CRYPTOQUOTE

PVVT AWXLHG EOVEDO RVHORSOW
VL QZLN TXPPOWOLR DOJODG.
XR 'G LVIWXGSQOLR VP RSO GVID
ZLT AVTN; XR 'G RWIDN DVJO.
— HXZTZ TO DZIWOLRXG

Cryptoquote: OH, MR. WEBSTER COULD NEVER DEFINE WHAT'S BEING SAID BETWEEN YOUR HEART AND MINE. — ALISON KRAUSS

Cruise ship Schedule: June 01 - 27 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH
SUN	01	SILVER SHADOW FREEWINDS - Dept.	08.00 ****	23.00 22.30	C E 1 -
WED	04	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C 1
TUE	10	CARNIVAL HORIZON CARNIVAL MARDI GRAS	09.00 13.00	23.00 23.00	C I 1
TUE	17	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL VISTA	07.00 13.00	16.00 23.00	B C 1
WED	18	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00 08.00 07.00	22.00 23.00 16.00	C B I 1
TUE	24	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C 1
FRI	27	SEVEN SEAS MARINER	10.00	21.00	C 1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

Americans sour on U.S. economy and anxiety over tariffs remains the chief culprit

By MATT OTT
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans' view of the U.S. economy worsened in June, resuming a downward slide that had dragged consumer confidence to its lowest level since the COVID-19 pandemic five years ago.

The Conference Board said Tuesday that its consumer confidence index slid to 93 in June, down 5.4 points from 98.4 last month, which represented a brief uptick.

The regression surprised economists, who had expected a small uptick this month.

In April, American consumers' confidence in the economy sank to its lowest reading since May 2020, largely due to anxiety over the impact of President Donald Trump's tariffs.

A measure of Americans' short-term expectations for their income, business conditions and the job market fell 4.6 points to 69. That's well below 80, the marker that can signal a recession ahead.

Consumers' assessments of the present economic situation declined by 6.4 points to 129.1.

Tariffs and the impact they could have on personal finances remained at the top of respondents' minds, the Conference Board said.

Trump's aggressive and unpredictable policies — including massive import taxes — have clouded the outlook for the economy and the job market, raising fears that the American economy is headed toward a recession.

Consumers' fears of a recession during the next 12 months rose slightly in June and remain elevated, according to the survey results. □

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Barbra Streisand finds 'The Secret of Life' on her new duets album with Bob Dylan and Paul McCartney

By GLENN GAMBOA

Associated Press

Barbra Streisand was worried.

She had just spent six days a week for six weeks recording the audiobook version of her 2023 memoir "My Name is Barbra" which became more than 48 hours of discussing her storied, EGOT-winning career and the unexpected life that came with it. But now, it was time to record a new album with a stunning lineup of duet partners that ranged from current hitmakers Hozier and Sam Smith to legends Bob Dylan, Paul McCartney and James Taylor. And when producers played the songs for her, she couldn't sing along. Her mighty voice would just squeak.

"My voice was shot," Streisand, 83, told The Associated Press, calling from her home in Malibu, California. "I mean, I literally prayed to God in front of that microphone, 'Let my voice be there for me.' And I don't know how, but it was there."

Fans will be able to hear that for themselves on Friday, when her album "The Secret of Life: Partners, Volume 2" arrives in stores and on streaming services. And despite her misgivings, Streisand shows she can still deliver the performances she wants, while also coaxing them out of others.

Bob Dylan: 'Would you sing with me?'

Her duet with Dylan had been decades in the making. In 1970, Dylan sent Streisand a bouquet of flowers and a note written in what she believes was crayon asking, "Would you sing with me?"

But they did not connect until decades later, when their styles had converged a bit. When Streisand started work on her new album, she sent Dylan a copy of her memoir with an inscription referring to their time separately performing in Greenwich Village as teenagers and hoping it was time to finally sing together. Choosing to rework the Ray



Singer Barbra Streisand performs in New York, Oct. 11, 2012.

Associated Press

Noble standard "The Very Thought of You" popularized by everyone from Nat King Cole and Tony Bennett to Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald turned out to be a surprise. It's not one of her personal favorites, though it is her longtime manager Marty Erlichman's favorite song.

Dylan, one of the most revered songwriters in music history, only wanted to sing a standard, not one of his own classics. "Isn't that great?" Streisand said. "I would've sung anything with him."

She also agreed to his request to keep everyone else out of the studio when they recorded including Streisand's husband, James Brolin, who often goes to her sessions.

"I had heard he wrote 'Lay, Lay, Lay' for me," she said. "So I thought, 'Let's make this lush, romantic track.'" Though Dylan has a reputation for not taking much direction from producers, Streisand said he was very receptive to her suggestions.

"He was totally open to 'Why don't you maybe try this?' or 'Phrase it this way' or 'Try something else' just like I do as a director in movies and he was my actor that day," she said. "To capture his originality and his voice and his phrasing, it was just an exciting expe-

rience."

McCartney worries about his 'Valentine'

Her experience with McCartney was more daunting. There was a full film crew on hand, led by Oscar-winning director Frank Marshall, to capture the recording of two of the world's most successful artists for an upcoming documentary on Streisand's life. Streisand said that added to the challenges of the session.

"He was kind of shy about it and I understand him," she said about recording "My Valentine" with McCartney. "I walked into a room of 25 people (to sing) and I don't like that."

McCartney told his website he was "terrified" during the three-hour session.

"I thought, 'Well, this will be easy because it's my song, it's 'My Valentine.'" What can go wrong?" he said. "But what I'd forgotten was that they'd arranged it so that it had to go in Barbra's key and then in my key. So, to get from Barbra's key into mine was kind of difficult. ... It wasn't easy at all!" They quickly worked it out. "It turned out great," said Streisand, who released the song in May as one of the album's preview singles. It's another single, though, that is resonating even more.

"Letter to My 13-Year-Old Self," Streisand's duet with Icelandic singer-songwriter Laufey, hit No. 1 on the iTunes chart earlier this month, topping Sabrina Carpenter's "Manchild" and Mariah Carey's "Type Dangerous" on release day.

Streisand related to the song because it reminded her of a middle-school report she wrote called "My Thirteen Years," which meant so much to her that she still has it. In neat, cursive writing, she recalled what her life was like, her love of Shakespearean sonnets and the death of her father, Emanuel. "I was too young to realize what had happened," she writes in the report.

Streisand connects to her '13-Year-Old Self'

It was at age 13 that Streisand also made her first record, when her mother brought her to Nola Studios in Manhattan to record "You'll Never Know" and "Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart." "When I was 13, that's a very distinguished year in my life," Streisand said. "So I hear this song ... and it really hit me."

She worked with Laufey to turn the original, which Laufey sang solo, into a duet. They settled on Laufey singing as the 13-year-old and Streisand as her moth-

er. Streisand said she was "absolutely thrilled" with how it turned out and how fans have responded to it. Sure, duet success is nothing new to Streisand, who has topped the charts with Neil Diamond on "You Don't Bring Me Flowers," and Donna Summer on "No More Tears (Enough Is Enough)," and a string of albums including "Duets," "Partners" and "Encore: Movie Partners Sing Broadway."

But "The Secret of Life: Partners, Volume 2" is different. Streisand said her worries about the world and President Donald Trump's second administration may have subconsciously contributed to her selection of some of the album's more serious tracks like Sting's "Fragile" and her reworking of "Love Will Survive" from last year's "The Tattooist of Auschwitz" series into a duet with Seal.

"I'd like to be happier," Streisand said. "But every time I turn on the television and I'm a glutton for punishment, obviously I'm fascinated and horrified at the same time, you know?"

At a recent dinner with U.S. Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., Streisand said he described the current state of Washington as "created chaos, corruption and cruelty."

Streisand added, "I thought, 'That kind of sums him (Trump) up.'"

However, Streisand, who has retired from touring, said she does plan to work on achieving the goal she set out in her memoir: To enjoy life more. "The Secret of Life" named from the James Taylor classic, as well as a children's book she reads her grandchildren has sparked thoughts about what enriches her life. "The secret of life is spending time with people you love," she said, adding she plans to release a string of photos of her and her "secrets," including her husband, her son Jason Gould, and other friends, family and, of course, dogs. Streisand is in her "stop and smell the roses" era. □



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SETAR

Aces struggle and Caitlin Clark hits a shooting slump early in WNBA season

By DOUG FEINBERG

AP Basketball Writer

For the second consecutive season the Las Vegas Aces have gotten off to a slow start.

The team snapped a three-game losing streak Sunday with a victory over Indiana. Las Vegas sits at 6-7, a rare time they are under .500 since the team came to the Nevada city in 2018. The victory over Caitlin Clark and the Fever was one of their best efforts of the season. (It also was ESPN's third most-watched WNBA regular-season game, averaging 1.7 million viewers.)

Coach Becky Hammon is hoping for more consistency moving forward.

"It's hard to build trust when you're not consistent. Every day. You got to show up. You got to be who you are and be the best version of yourself," she said. "And we haven't got that yet. We've got it in pieces, which makes me optimistic. And then we have, you know, where we fall to pieces, which enrages me."



Las Vegas Aces guard Chelsea Gray (12) and center A'ja Wilson (22) celebrate after a play against the Seattle Storm during the first half of a WNBA basketball game Friday, June 20, 2025, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

So, you know, we have to find a way to show up and put a 40-minute game together."

The Aces look to string some wins together now with Connecticut and Washington coming to Las

Vegas for back-to-back games this week. The team then goes on a five-game road trip that will go a long way to determining where they are heading into the All-Star break.

Hammon is hoping to get

Jewell Loyd going on offense. She's averaging just 11.4 points this season her lowest total since her rookie year in 2015.

Clark's shooting woes
Clark isn't worried about her recent shooting slump

over the past two games when she's gone 1-for-17 from behind the 3-point arc. She's a career 35% 3-point shooter, with many of her shots coming from way behind the 3-point line.

"I mean, there's going to be stretches that are really good and stretches that aren't as good," she said. "Obviously it's frustrating. You want them to go in and even tonight there were a few that felt really good off my hand that just didn't go down."

Clark hasn't lost faith in her shooting.

"The challenge for myself going forward is just continue to pour into every other aspect of the game and I can continue to have an impact in those other areas."

Early voting returns

Clark and Napheesa Collier are leading fan All-Star voting through Friday. Three of Clark's Fever teammates are also in the top 10 of the voting that will close Saturday. □

Steelers QB Aaron Rodgers is 'pretty sure' the 2025 season will be his last in the NFL



Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Aaron Rodgers (8) looks on during practice at NFL football minicamp, Tuesday, June 10, 2025, in Pittsburgh.

Associated Press

By BEN NUCKOLS
AP Sports Writer

Aaron Rodgers is "pretty sure" the 2025 season, his first with the Pittsburgh Steelers, will be his last in the NFL, the 41-year-old quarterback said Tuesday.

The four-time MVP signed a one-year deal with Pittsburgh earlier this month after two injury-marred seasons with the New York Jets. Rodgers' base salary is \$13.65 million and he could earn up to \$19.5 million with incentives, according to Spotrac.

"I'm pretty sure this is it. That's why we just did a one-year deal. The Steelers didn't need to put any extra years on that or anything," Rodgers said on "The Pat McAfee Show." "This was really about

finishing with a lot of love and fun and peace for the career that I've had."

Rodgers agreed to sign with Pittsburgh after regular conversations with coach Mike Tomlin over a few months, characterizing the decision during the Steelers' recent minicamp as "best for my soul."

"It's been a long run and I've enjoyed it, and what better place to finish than in one of the cornerstone franchises of the NFL, with Mike Tomlin and a great group of leadership and great guys and a city that expects you to win," Rodgers said Tuesday. Rodgers also explained why he has not disclosed more details about his recent marriage to a woman he has identified only by her first name, Brittni. □

From racetrack to ballpark: Bristol's MLB transformation shifts into high gear

By TERESA M. WALKER

AP Sports Writer

Turning a racetrack into a baseball field worthy of hosting Major League Baseball takes time and a plan.

Demolition started in early June with heavy construction now in high gear to transform Bristol Motor Speedway into a ballpark if only for the Aug. 2 Speedway Classic between the Atlanta Braves and Cincinnati Reds in the first MLB game in the state of Tennessee.

As of Tuesday, Bristol no longer is a racetrack.

"It's not going to be good to have a 2-foot wall ... in the outfield for a player to run into, so naturally those



MLB Speedway Classic Open House Event marking the construction of a baseball field at Bristol Motor Speedway in Bristol, Tenn., Tuesday, June 24, 2025.

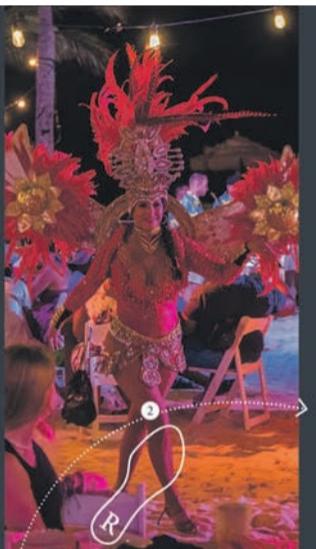
Associated Press

Experience Aruban culture with this exciting theme night featuring a Carnival show, mixology bar, local artists and more. You can sample Aruban cuisine, including delicious BBQ options with a tropical twist. A local brass band will be performing, and you can pose with elaborately dressed Carnival dancers for a memorable photo op as well, so don't miss it.

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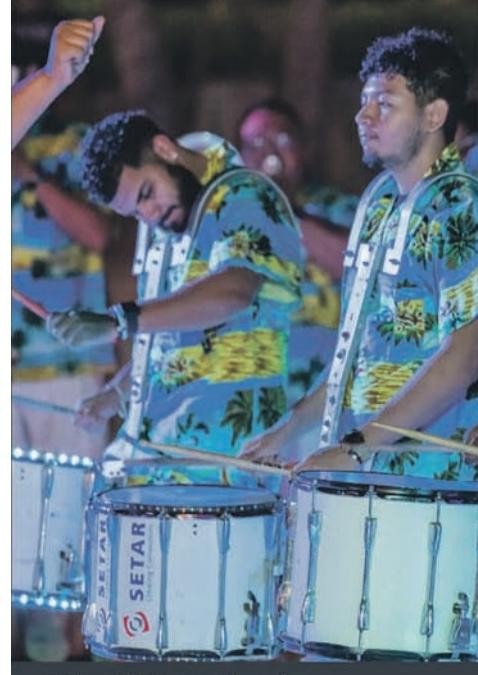
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nature, and it's been precisely planned layers and layers," BaAM president Annemarie Roe said. "We have about 33 days from today until we hand over to baseball operations."

There will be grandstands down both the first- and third-base lines with broadcast booths, camera platforms, media positions and video replay included along with audio and video components. Concessions and merchandise will be available for fans on game day.

For any players wanting to go over the wall, they'll have to carry 400 feet to clear center field, 375 in the alleys and 330 down each base line.

True renovations always reveal something owners don't expect. Same goes for Bristol officials who found out they won't have to replace everything after Aug. 2.

Swift said they won't have to replace the Sunoco pumps and tanks with NASCAR now bringing those to each race. The Sunoco signs also are gone to avoid sitting in center field. Half an infield building was removed to clear space for the outfield wall.

Bristol has loads of experience with extreme track makeovers from bringing in dump trucks of dirt for races. This track hosted a college football game in the Battle of Bristol, drawing an NCAA-record 156,990 fans in 2016.

Interest has been big, and MLB is planning a lot of events before the first pitch with Pitbull and Tim McGraw already set for a pregame concert from a stage in the infield.

Country star Jake Owen will highlight more performances outside the track announced Tuesday.

The fan zone also will feature the Commissioner's Trophy, a 110-foot Ferris wheel, a food truck row, pitching tunnels and batting cages, team mascots and being Bristol branded MLB stock cars for photos. □

had to go," Steve Swift, senior vice president of operations development for Speedway Motorsports, said.

Turning this track into a ballpark requires about 17,500 tons of gravel to level the infield. Murray Cook, president of BrightView Sports Turf Division, said trucks will start bringing in 340 tons of Pennsylvania clay for the playing surface later this week.

The grass will be synthetic with 124,000 square feet set to be laid down with this field using the same surface as the Blue Jays in Toronto. There will be fencing, padding and foul poles. Musco Sports Lighting is adding 215 lights to the top of the track so no ball should be lost in a shadow.

"The field obviously is a big part of this event, and we're making it as major league level as it needs to be for this game," Cook said.

Hosting an MLB game requires much more than just a field. BaAM is helping MLB and Bristol so that the teams have locker rooms complete with showers, strength and conditioning rooms, coach and trainers' offices, batting cages and even a full weight room.

"Everything that we're going to do is temporary in